

Fireworks Safety Tips

Nearly 13,000 fireworks victims are treated in hospital emergency rooms each year. Even though this accounts for just a small portion of the estimated 70 million Americans who sustain nonfatal injuries each year, there are some safety precautions that we can all follow to ensure the safety of others and ourselves. Also check with your installation, city, and or county to see if the use of fireworks is permitted or if there is a designated safe zone to use for fireworks.

- Always buy fireworks from reliable, licensed retail outlets.
- Always have an adult present.
- Always use fireworks outdoors, never use fireworks indoors.
- Always light fireworks one piece at a time, and move away quickly. Do not light them in your hand.
- Always read the instructions on each piece carefully and follow the label directions with close adult supervision.
- Use a "punk" to ignite the fireworks. Punks burn without an open flame and provide a greater, safer distance between your hand and the fireworks. Open flames from lighters and matches can cause additional fire hazards.
- Always use fireworks away from buildings, dry grass, or trees.
- The shooter should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the fireworks.
- Always have water handy (pail of water or water hose).
- Store fireworks in a cool dry place.
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- Never experiment with homemade or altered fireworks.
- Never try to re-light malfunctioning (dud) fireworks. If an item does not light easily, or lights and then fizzes out, do not approach the dud for 15-20 minutes and then soak it with a bucket of water.
- Sparklers are the only fireworks that can be held in your hands. Never give sparklers to young children.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never point or light fireworks at people or animals.
- Never handle fireworks when you are under the influence of alcohol.
- Never use illegal fireworks.
- Do not put fireworks in a container to ignite. They need to be in an open space.
- If possible, wet down dry grass or combustible materials located beneath ground display pieces before lighting.
- Never use fireworks in high winds.
- Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in a trashcan.